

## Differences of Opinion – A Wife's Timing

Proverbs 25:8 - "Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame."

In our early days of marriage, in my zeal to develop a rich oneness, I saw each clash of opinions as an impediment to that goal. As soon as that weed of disunity showed its ugly head, I "hastily" mowed it down by confronting things head-on. Only that didn't work so well. I hadn't yet realized that timing can be a large determiner of success.

It came as a surprise to me to learn that I didn't have to deal with every difference as soon as it popped up! In fact, God showed me, step by step, clear Biblical principles that guide **when** to handle issues. And I found that the right timing made all the difference.

**Wait to cool down.** "A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame." (Prov. 12:16) "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards." (Prov. 29:11) The person who, as soon as her temper flares, makes her wrath "presently known" is acting the part of a fool. Wait to cool down before you deal with the matter. As I learned in my Christian Womanhood class in Bible college, "Speak when you are angry, and you'll make the best speech you'll ever regret!"

**Wait to rest up and recharge.** That urgent, pressing matter might actually be a product of 'that time of the month' or the fact that you're running on too little sleep. Elisha showcases the problem of running on too little for too long. After a long and demanding day and a huge spiritual victory, his life was threatened. 1Kings 19:3-9 says, "And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life ...a day's journey into the wilderness, and ...he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life ... . And as he lay and slept ...an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, ...and said, Arise and eat ... . And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb ... . And ... the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?" God Himself did not approach Elisha's defection from the ministry until after forty days of God-given refreshment. Take care of yourself with appropriate rest and regular healthy meals. When you're under less unnecessary physical strain, potential for conflict is lessened. Make sure you're not attempting to solve the world's problems when what you really need is a nap.

Also, take care of your husband. Be sure all of his needs are being met. God gave a married man an outlet for his drive that if not used can result in that man becoming aggressive. Problems and issues may pop up that wouldn't have if he was taken care of. Warm meals and warm nights greatly mellow a husband. I Corinthians 7:2-5 explains, "...to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. **Defraud ye not one the other**, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, **that Satan tempt you not** for your incontinency." Your cold shoulder or neglect opens the door for Satan to tempt your husband to anger or worse.

**Wait for a healthy balance.** "...the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping." (Prov. 19:13b) "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike." (Prov. 27:15) Don't be a continual drippy faucet about issues, whether a single particular issue over and over again, or many issues one after another. If it feels like all you've been doing is handling problems, back off. Remind yourself what makes your husband so special. Enjoy his presence. The problems will still be there later, and if they're not – all the better!

**Wait for privacy.** "Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another: Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away." (Prov. 25:9-10) "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly." (Prov. 26:22) Talk to only your husband about the issue. Nobody else needs to know. If you "bear tales" and air your grievances with others outside your marriage, the Bible says your words deeply "wound" your husband. Those who've recovered from a C-section know what it's like to have a deep abdominal wound. Is that really the effect you want your words to have on your husband?

**Don't wait for him to figure it out and bring it up.** "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." (Matt. 18:15) "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." (Matt. 5:23-24) Whether you have a problem with him or you think he might have a problem with you, in looking for appropriate timing, assume personal responsibility for getting things dealt with. Don't wait for him to come to you. He may not realize there is a problem!

**Wait patiently on God.** "Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." (Ps. 37:5) Don't be concerned if it takes more than one discussion to come to an agreement on some issues. Be patient with the process, and love your husband just like you would any other time as you're **waiting for God** to show you two the way.

**Wait and pray** for the right time. (Write it down if you need to, so you won't forget.) "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:" (Eccl. 3:1) When you think it might be a good time, still show him respect by asking a question such as, "Is this a good time to talk?" You may also find that God nudges your husband to ask you if there's anything you want to talk about.

So once you've decided to approach a subject with your husband, don't just barge into it. Be sure you and your husband are in good spirits. Choose a time when other pressures won't cause issues. Keep the discussion just between the two of you. The right timing will make all the difference!